

## Chapter 28

# Fighting the Persian Wars

*What factors influenced the outcome of the Persian wars?*

### 28.1 Introduction

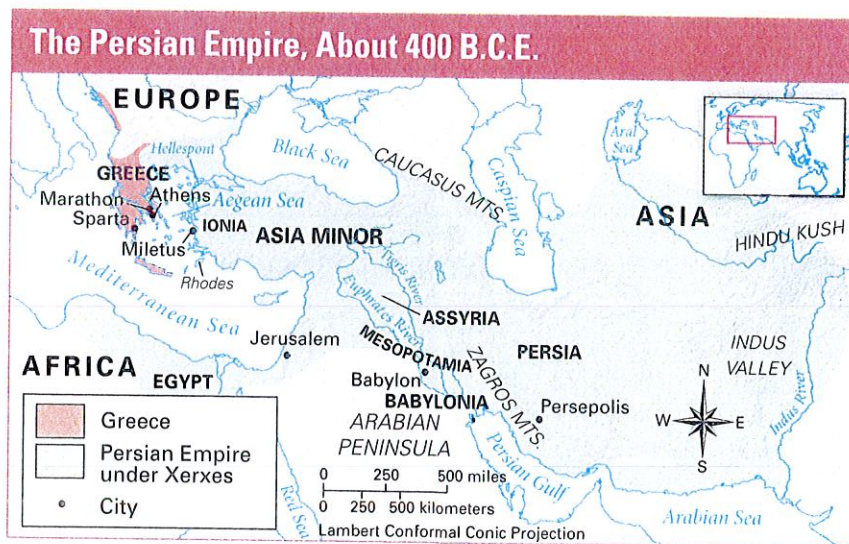
Athens and Sparta were two very different city-states in ancient Greece. Their differences sometimes led to a distrust of each other. But between 499 and 479 B.C.E., these city-states had a common enemy—the Persian Empire.

At that time, Persia was the largest empire the world had ever seen. Its powerful kings ruled over lands in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. During the 400s B.C.E., the Persians invaded Greece, and the Persian wars began.

To fight the Persians, the Greek city-states eventually joined together as allies. Allies are states that agree to help each other against a common enemy.

Compared with Persia, these tiny Greek city-states had much less land and far fewer people. How could they possibly turn back such a powerful invader? In this chapter, you will learn about important battles during the Persian wars and discover who won them. You will also learn about the factors that influenced the outcome of the Persian wars.

In the 400s B.C.E., the vast Persian Empire extended from the Middle East and northeastern Africa to modern-day Pakistan. The Persians wanted to claim Greece as well.



◀ On this pottery, a Greek soldier defeats a Persian soldier.



**Persian Empire** a vast empire in the 400s B.C.E. that ruled over lands in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia

**Darius** a great Persian king who ruled from about 522 to 486 B.C.E.

**Persian wars** (490–479 B.C.E.) the period of fighting waged between the Persian Empire and the allied Greek city-states for control of land in Greece

## 28.2 The Persian Empire and the Ionian Revolt

The Persians started out as a small group of nomads, in what is now Iran. They built a large empire by conquering neighbors. By unleashing a storm of arrows that surprised their enemies, Persian archers won many battles, often before their opponents could get close enough to use their lances, or spears.

At its height, the **Persian Empire** extended from Egypt, in North Africa, east to the Indus River in present-day Pakistan. The empire was ruled by powerful kings who conquered Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Egypt, and parts of India and Europe.

To rule such a large area, King **Darius** (duh-RAHY-uhs), one of the greatest of all the Persian kings, divided the empire into 20 provinces. He established a system of tax collection and appointed officials to rule local areas. He allowed conquered peoples to keep their own customs and religions. King Darius ruled Persia from 522 to 486 B.C.E.

The Ionian Revolt, which began in 499 B.C.E., led to the start of the **Persian wars**. Earlier, in 546 B.C.E., the Persians had conquered the wealthy Greek settlements in Ionia, a small

coastal region bordering the Aegean Sea, in Asia Minor. The Persians took the Ionians' farmland and harbors. They forced the Ionians to pay tributes, or the regular payments of goods. The Ionians also had to serve in the Persian army.

The Ionians knew that they could not defeat the Persians by themselves, so they asked mainland Greece for help. Athens sent soldiers and a small fleet of ships. Unfortunately for the Ionians, the Athenians went home after an **initial** success, leaving the small Ionian army to continue fighting alone.

In 493 B.C.E., the Persian army defeated the Ionians. To punish the Ionians for rebelling, the Persians destroyed the city of Miletus (my-LEE-tuhs).

This detail from a piece of painted pottery shows King Darius of Persia conducting a council of war.

